

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MAPUTO 00284 231156Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----231158Z 053888 /13/44
O 211530Z MAR 77 CORRECTED COPY FOR MRN
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5597
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T MAPUTO 0284

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR MRN (0284 VICE 0281)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MZ, CG, US
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE MACHEL ROLE IN EASING ZAIRE SITUATION?

REF: (A) STATE 061927; (B) STATE 058185; (C) DAR 1082
(D) MAPUTO 246; (E) MAPUTO 203

1. SUMMARY: IT MY JUDGMENT THAT IF MACHEL INVOLVES HIMSELF IN ZAIRE SITUATION, HIS INFLUENCE IS LIKELY BE NEGATIVE INsofar AS USG INTERESTS ARE CONCERNED. I THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT WE NOT SEEK TO INVOLVE HIM. ON OTHER HAND, I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO PROVIDE HIM WITH OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION AND TO SHARE WITH HIM OUR CONCERNS, BELIEVE THIS CAN BEST BE DONE IN FORM MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CARTER TO MACHEL. SUCH OCCASIONAL MESSAGES MAY MAKE IT EASIER FOR US TO ENGAGE MACHEL IN FUTRE DIALOGUE ON ZIMBABWE, WHEN HIS PARTICIPATION COULD BE OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE.

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END SUMMARY

2. MACHEL'S VIEWS ON ZAIRE. AS REPORTED REFTTEL D, MACHEL IS A CLOSE PERSONAL FRIEND OF NETO, CONSIDERS MOBUTO TO BE AN INSTRUMENT OF THE WEST, AND IS IDEOLOGICALLY PREDISPOSED TO SUSPECT ZAIRIAN AND USG ACTIONS IN AFRICA. HE IS ALSO WILLING TO RUN RISKS WHEN HE THINKS THEY

WILL PROMOTE "REVOLUTIONARY" ENDS TO WHICH HE COMMITTED. EVEN WERE HE TO SHARE OUR CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF FIGHTING IN SHABA (REFTEL B), HE IS UNLIKELY TO TAKE ANY ACTION THAT WOULD BE CONTRARY TO INTEREST OR WISHES OF NETO.

3. INFORMATION SHORTCOMINGS. MACHEL'S INFORMATION OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ZAIRE IS NO DOUBT DISTORTED, BEING BASED PRIMARILY ON WHAT HIS RADICAL INFORMATION MINISTRY OFFICIALS OR NETO ARE TELLING HIM. IN ALL PROBABILITY NYERERE (AND PERHAPS KAUNDA) ARE KEEPING MACHEL INFORMED OF WHAT WE ARE TELLING THEM ABOUT EVENTS IN ZAIRE, BUT MACHEL IS SENSITIVE TO HIS OWN IMPORTANCE, AND, WHEN WE CAN, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD ENGAGE IN DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH HIM.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS. I RECOMMEND THAT WE NOT INVOLVE MACHEL IN ANY DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE WE MAY SEEK TO DEVELOP BUT THAT WE SHARE WITH HIM OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION. AT A MINIMUM TELLING HIM WHAT ASSISTANCE WE ARE PROVIDING MOBUTO AND WHY. I BELIEVE THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF CONVEYING THIS INFORMATION WOULD BE IN FORM OF MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CARTER TO MACHEL. SHABA DEVELOPMENTS APPEAR TO BE GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO PROBE WHETHER MACHEL IS IN FACT SERIOUS ABOUT ENTERING INTO A DIALOGUE WITH US ON MAJOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS, AS SUGGESTED REFTTEL E. PERIODIC MESSAGES TO MACHEL MAY MAKE IT EASIER FOR US TO ENGAGE HIM IN MORE EXTENSIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS IF AND WHEN WE DECIDE TO HAVE ANOTHER TRY AT
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ACHIEVING A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN ZIMBABWE.

5. IF THERE ARE TALKING POINTS THE DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE ME TO MAKE ORALLY, I WILL SEEK AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE PRESIDENT. IN THE PAST, MACHEL HAS BEEN WILLING TO SEE ME WHEN I HAD MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO DELIVER. HOWEVER, I SHOULD NOTE THAT MACHEL WILL BE BUSY THE NEXT TWO WEEKS WITH VISITS OF PODGORNYY AND (PROBABLY) CASTRO, AND I MAY HAVE DIFFICULTIES GETTING IN TO SEE HIM.
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